

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 189 369

CE 025 848

AUTHOR Chastain, J. Dale; Schindler, Arlene K.
 TITLE Primer for Trainers. One of a Series of Studies in Volunteerism, Training & Employment.
 INSTITUTION Women in Community Service, Inc., Washington, D.C.
 NOTE 25p.
 EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS Communication Skills; Cultural Differences; Educational Administration; Educational Environment; Leaders Guides; *Leadership; Participation; Teaching Methods; *Teaching Skills; *Trainers; *Workshops

ABSTRACT

Intended for novice trainers, this primer contains basic information about workshops and the tasks and skills necessary for effective leadership of workshops. Likening the tasks of a workshop leader to those of the classroom teacher, the first chapter deals with the workshop as an educational event and the management of the workshop. The following chapter provides direction on creating a learning environment, presenting information, and directing and monitoring activities. Chapter 3, Managing Individual Participation, explores the behavior states of both leaders and participants, leader participant transaction, and the fact that no leader states have inherent value in and of themselves. Another chapter is devoted to the processing of contributions of participants and the integration of them into the workshop content. The final chapter discusses interpersonal communication among participants and with the workshop trainer, with emphasis placed on the recognition of the respect for cultural diversity. (MEK)

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ED189369

primer for trainers

**J. Dale Chastain &
Arlene K. Schindler, Ph.D**

One of a series of
Studies in Volunteerism,
Training & Employment

Women in Community Service, Inc.
1730 Rhode Island Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20036



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INTRODUCTION

The PRIMER FOR TRAINERS contains basic information about workshops and the tasks and skills of the effective leader of workshops. While intended for the novice trainer, it includes many reminders for the workshop leader whose experience is extensive and whose skills are great.

We believe that a workshop is similar to a classroom and that the tasks of a workshop leader are similar to those of a classroom teacher. We, also, believe that the differences between a workshop and classroom challenge the workshop leader and make the performance of the tasks more difficult. The PRIMER FOR TRAINERS presents these challenges and tasks in language we consider readily understandable. Occasionally, we have invested words or phrases with a specific meaning and we have attempted to describe this usage adequately.

We include no references, footnotes, or bibliography. Wanting to encourage the reading of PRIMER FOR TRAINERS, we adopted a format which does not include items generally associated with research and scholarship. For those wishing additional literature, books and monographs on training and conducting workshops are easily located in any library. We hope you read beyond PRIMER FOR TRAINERS, reflect on your own experience as teacher, trainer, and workshop participant. Most of all, we hope you practice.

J. Dale Chastain
Arlene K. Shindler

Chapter I

THE WORKSHOP AND THE WORKSHOP LEADER

It is not uncommon for someone asked to lead a workshop to be unaware of the appropriate role and necessary skills of a workshop leader. If one first understands the function of a workshop, the attributes of the effective leader can be clarified. While all agree that there should be specific reasons that justify convening any workshop, many people do not ordinarily think of workshops as educational events that are planned to achieve educational goals.

The Workshop as an Educational Event. Because the workshop is an educational event, it is similar to the daily classroom situation. There, students and teacher gather, a plan of instruction is evident, and a schedule is specified. The students receive and acquire information and indicate to the teacher their degree of understanding. The teacher, like the effective workshop leader, carefully selects and utilizes instructional aids and methods that are appropriate to educational purposes and goals.

Since the workshop and classroom are similar in function, the responsibilities and tasks of the leaders in both situations are similar. Individuals who have been trained as teachers generally have an advantage. With some adaptation of previously learned skills to the unique characteristics of a workshop, they can become effective workshop leaders. But those who have not been formally trained as teachers have, nevertheless, been periodically involved in teaching. At one time or another, each of us has taught a daughter to drive or a son to bake cookies, a co-worker to understand office procedures, or a volunteer to understand an assignment within an organization.

Reflecting on these types of teaching allows identification of certain elements of the teaching process that contribute to success or failure. For success, the learner must be involved, interested enough in acquiring the skill to want to learn it. A demonstration of the skill is more effective than a description, as anyone who has ever tried to describe to a novice the steps in baking a cake can attest. Having an opportunity for practicing the skill is better than thinking about it. If information and skills are introduced in logical sequence, if previously learned skills can be adapted, and information is presented in various ways, then the potential for learning is enhanced. Involvement, demonstration, practice, sequence, adaptation, and repetition are elements of successful teaching, whether occurring in the workshop or classroom.

However, a workshop differs from the regular classroom situation in some ways. The workshop leader has little opportunity to assess the skill and information level of those attending. A workshop may be highly heterogeneous in age, education, cultural background, professions, and life experience. Additionally, workshop participants may have very different assumptions about how their needs relate to the workshop purposes and goals. They may be quick to judge the relevance of the workshop for their individual situations. Some participants may be more qualified than the workshop leader in certain aspects of the workshop content. Finally, there are limited opportunities for evaluation of individual learning. In these respects, leading a workshop is more challenging than teaching in a regular classroom situation, and workshop leaders, including trained teachers, will need to pay special attention to the differences between adult workshops and classrooms.

Managing a workshop and ensuring that learning occurs, involves the trainer in six major tasks. These tasks are to: 1) manage the continuity line; 2) create and maintain a learning environment; 3) present information; 4) direct and monitor

activities; 5) control individual participation; and 6) process information. Some of these tasks are performed simultaneously. They are rarely sequential, and a workshop leader generally performs several of them at the same time. Of the six tasks, no one is more or less important, but one is less understood than any other. This task is the management of the continuity line.

Managing the Continuity Line. While the information line may be thought of as a smooth, uninterrupted flow of information, it is actually uneven and broken. The flow of information is disrupted by coffee breaks, changing from large group to small group activities, participant restlessness, differing personal agendas, and logistical mishaps. Consequently, the workshop leader must manage material, information, planned activities, mishaps, and individual participation so that the flow of information is continuous.

Management of the continuity line begins with the workshop leader's thorough, calculated development of a mind set. Mind set is an anticipation by the participants of what will occur. The desired mind set is a readiness to learn. It results from the arrangement of the facility, initial contact with the workshop leader, verification or revision of participants' expectations, and information about the workshop schedule, coffee breaks, lunch arrangements, and expected involvement of individuals.

Workshop leaders who arrive breathless and harried, blaming others for a poorly arranged facility and the absence of needed equipment have created a mind set in participants that anticipates with doubt and skepticism. The workshop leader's thorough preparation will show; it will create a mind set of readiness to learn.

The continuity of information is maintained by the workshop leader who manages transitions, bridges,

and breaks. A transition is necessary when there is a shift from one topic to another topic, a change in activities, the use of a different medium to communicate similar information. Managing a transition requires the workshop leader to develop the relevance of what has happened to what will now happen. Bridges, built by the workshop leader help participants understand the relationship between and among parts of the workshop that are separated by time. For example, what was presented at ten o'clock in the morning may be referred to at two o'clock in the afternoon. A break is a planned or unplanned interruption; it may be for lunch or coffee. It might be the late entry of six people. A summary of the workshop prior to the break must be presented along with a brief introduction of what will occur after the break. Following the break, participants should be reminded of what occurred prior to the break and what will occur now that the workshop has resumed.

Every workshop requires accordions. Accordions are activities that can be stretched, squeezed, or eliminated depending on time available and the experience of participants. Accordions must be a reinforcement of a purpose or concept already introduced and elaborated; they must not introduce a new, major principle since their elimination would prevent the achievement of a workshop purpose or the development of a concept.

A summary places workshop activities and information into perspective. The group, with the workshop leader's summary, understands where it started, where it has come, and the steps in that progression. A summary permits a conclusion so that participants depart the workshop with a sense of satisfaction, order and completion.

Workshop leaders should prepare mentally to develop a desirable mind set; manage transitions, bridges, and breaks; handle accordions; and present a summary and a conclusion. These skills relate directly to the tasks of the workshop leader and to the quality of the workshop.

WORKSHOP CONTINUITY LINE



SET DEVELOPMENT [

TRANSITIONS

BRIDGES (RECAPITULATION) (coiled spring icon)

BREAKS (arc icon)

ACCORDIONS (zigzag icon)

SUMMARY (box with X icon)

CONCLUSION (return arrow icon)

Chapter II

ADDITIONAL TRAINER TASKS

Managing the continuity line is one of the tasks of the trainer. The additional trainer tasks discussed in this chapter are: creating and maintaining a learning environment, presenting information, and directing and monitoring activities. The tasks of processing information and controlling individual participation will be presented in later chapters.

Creating and Maintaining a Learning Environment. Mind set has been discussed as an anticipation of the participants of what will occur, and the desired mind set is a readiness to learn. The workshop leader's development of the desired mind set prepares participants for involvement, clarifies purposes, establishes the schedule, removes barriers to learning, and sets the tone for positive accomplishment. In developing the desired mind set, workshop leaders have an opportunity to prepare themselves for the workshop.

Most workshop leaders use a warm-up activity in developing the desired mind set. The warm-up is viewed as a way to relax participants, and every workshop leader has a favorite ritual, from humor and disclaimers to introduction of participants. The impact of warm-ups should be seriously analyzed. For instance, the workshop leader's humor might be inappropriate to purposes and for participants. Disclaimers can create a negative mind set ("I don't know what I'm doing here" or "I'm sorry I'm late, but I had something important to do.") Reflect on the disclaimers of workshop leaders that you have heard and you will probably conclude that you were convinced the workshop was poorly prepared and inadequately planned. Self-introductions by participants do not achieve significantly increased familiarity with one another. Workshop leaders should use warm-ups as a self-serving device; to 'warm-up'

themselves, a chance to get comfortable in front of the group, an opportunity to get over initial apprehension.

Workshop participants can be prepared for concentration, participation, and learning. First, concentration is enhanced when inhibitors to learning are removed. These inhibitors may be apprehension about involvement, physical discomfort, concern about time and schedule, or the leader's unpreparedness about table arrangements and hand-outs. Second, participation is encouraged when individuals sense that each is part of the group, that contributions will be respected, and that comment will not lead to embarrassment. Third, learning is more likely when participants understand the purposes of the workshop and can match their expectations with these purposes. Whatever the workshop leader's personal preference, the warm-up activity should be based on and integrate a discussion of workshop purposes. For example, a well prepared chart can convey workshop purposes, indicate the professional quality of the workshop leader, and transfer attention from the leader to the chart.

Presenting Information. The presentation of information, an essential part of every workshop, must contribute to the creation and maintenance of a learning environment. Workshop leaders may rely on a lecture to present information. The lecture format may be appropriate, but only the most dynamic lecturer should present information without visual aids. Sometimes, information and explanations are so complicated that participants need additional help in order to understand what is being said. A visual aid is helpful in these situations.

An overhead projector is particularly helpful when developing concepts. A chalkboard, flipchart, pre-drawn chart, flannel graph, slides, movies, demonstrations--all are visual aids that add variety to the presentation and make the information significant.

Moreover, visual aids add interest to long, involved presentations. Visual aids present explicit information which is essential to the workshop and upon which discussion can be based.

Participatory activities, whether group or individual, provide another way for the leader to present information. For example, brainstorming allows a group to generate many ideas in a very short time. Ideas processed from brainstorming activities can be used as the base for discussion and subsequent activities. Other group or individual activities such as case studies, critical incidents, role-playing, simulation, in-basket, and fishbowl are methods for achieving specific workshop goals.

Workshop leaders wishing to promote learning will carefully analyze techniques of presentation in relation to content, impact of the technique, composition of the group, and purposes.

Directing and Monitoring Activities. Activities, if properly selected and designed, are excellent ways of teaching adults. Adults acquire new information through practice which persuades them of the information's relevance and provides an opportunity to integrate the information into their prior experience. Successful activities begin with clear instructions demonstrating the significance of the activity to the workshop purposes and indicating the method of accomplishing the activity. Instructions must describe the logistical re-arrangements, explain the organization of small groups, present the task, and set the time for the activity. Most of us believe that we can give clear instructions, but instructions in a workshop should always be verified. If the entire group is to work on a single activity, request a participant to repeat the instructions; if the group is divided into clusters, then have a member of each small group repeat the instructions. If the instructions, as repeated, are not accurate, then re-teach

the instructions followed by yet another opportunity to verify participants' understanding.

Workshop leaders must continually monitor small group activities. Small group activities are not a signal for a workshop leader 'break.' The workshop leader must circulate among the small groups verifying instructions, tasks, and purposes. This verification must be accomplished with no attitude of supervision, yet the workshop leader must make certain that the group understands the activity. Furthermore, the workshop leader needs to know the quality and nature of individual participation. With the conclusion of the activity, these insights will assist the workshop leader in encouraging and handling the discussion among participants. Monitoring requires the skill of unobtrusive eavesdropping, and the intervention of the workshop leader to correct subtly and re-focus emphasis must not disrupt the interaction of the participants.

Chapter III

MANAGING INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION

Group management is always of primary concern to workshop leaders, and of special concern to those with limited experience. If there is lack of involvement, excessive involvement, or hostility within a group, the leader needs to analyze the cause and take corrective actions. Paramount in the management of groups is an understanding of the interrelations among people and how these contribute to either a positive or negative dynamic within the group. Based on this understanding, workshop leaders can manage groups to achieve the desired dynamic and interaction.

A useful structure is to imagine three possible states: Expert, Facilitator, and Seeker. They may be

thought of as mental attitudes which are demonstrated through language, gestures, stance, and facial expression. Each has characteristics which distinguish it from the others, and each of these states may be assumed by the leader and participants as a workshop progresses.

Behavior States of a Leader. The workshop leader most often assumes the Expert state. The Expert state is authoritative. It relies on outside sources and includes opinions, conclusions, judgments, and analyses of others regarded as experts: parents, professors, experienced friends, books, journals. The information of the Expert is fact; it is correct, right, and proper. The Expert knows the right method from the wrong, the bad from the good, the peculiar from the normal.

Participants in a workshop quickly and easily assign the Expert state to the leader, and many workshop leaders wish to display attributes associated with the Expert state. For example, they may stand on a raised platform or stand behind a podium, insist on elaborate introductions, speak from carefully prepared notes, provide auditorium seating, rely heavily on quotations, and limit participation to a question-and-answer period. Excessive efforts by the workshop leader to achieve the Expert state may result in participant disappointment, cynicism, and ridicule. In addition, inappropriate reliance on the Expert state may result in confrontation, hostility, and resentment. Since most people attending workshops expect a leader-Expert, the effective workshop leader will not reinforce this expectation. Rather the workshop leader can, without denying the Expert state, encourage participants to accept other leader states during the course of the workshop.

The leader may sometimes assume the Facilitator state. The leader-Facilitator views the workshop as a collection of mature people with experience and

knowledge. The workshop dynamic sought is 'among not between.' The leader-Facilitator enables perspectives to broaden and new insights to develop within participants as they exchange opinions and judgments. Thus, participants can leave the workshop aware of their broad experience, increased confidence, and satisfied that others listened attentively. The leader-Facilitator must involve participants in directed discussions leading to useful conclusions and avoid discussion, dominated by a few, or continuing aimlessly.

A third state is Seeker. The Seeker is marked by inquiry, a search for information, and a need for guidance. The Seeker state is evident when the workshop leader seeks clarification, "Would you explain your position further. I don't quite understand."

The Expert presents information, draws conclusions, and expects participants to accept with little questioning. The Facilitator directs thinking, contributes to the discussion, and extracts relevant conclusions from the comments representing participants' knowledge and experience. The Seeker expects information, answers, and conclusions from others.

Behavior States of Participants. While the three possible participant states are identical to the leader states, the tendency to adopt and the reasons for adopting one differ greatly. Generally, people attend a workshop in the Seeker state. The Seeker state is generally docile; but a participant-Seeker may, with excessive questioning, disrupt the pace of a workshop and distress other participants. Assuming the Seeker state, a participant may want attention. There may not be a genuine search for information, and the workshop leader must handle this situation without embarrassing the participant. "I believe we'll cover that issue more appropriately later" or "Let's get together during the coffee break," may allow the workshop leader to resume the pace and direction of the workshop.

A comment from a participant-Seeker frequently provides an opportunity to introduce a new dimension to the discussion or to undertake a new activity. The effective workshop leader will also build on the inquiries of a participant-Seeker to establish principles developed in the previous discussion, to undertake a conclusion of the activity, or to summarize for the benefit of all participants what has transpired.

Participants do not often assume the Facilitator state without encouragement from the workshop leader. It is an important state for participants, permitting experienced persons to help the workshop leader by re-phrasing and clarifying comments from other participants. A workshop leader can encourage participant-Facilitators as advocates for less articulate or less active group members. Activities conducted in small groups also enable the Facilitator state to be assumed by participants, and the workshop leader can encourage participant-Facilitators while monitoring small group activities.

Occasionally participants assume the Expert state. Most often, participants assume the Expert state to establish their credentials. "I've been involved in this work for fifteen years, and I think that. . ." or "I conducted a workshop on this same topic just last week, and I feel that. . ." In control of the situation, the workshop leader can provide equal opportunity to all participants to establish credentials through self-introductions. Or the workshop leader can indicate that the workshop includes extensive experience and permits each to benefit from the others.

Leader-Participant Transactions. All transactions have consequences which the workshop leader must learn to calculate. The most comfortable transaction for the participant-Seeker is with the leader-Expert, yet if the leader-Facilitator responds to the

participant-Seeker, all participants' expectations are altered and they are encouraged to assume states other than Seeker. This transaction does not nullify the leader as Expert, but it does emphasize collective experience and suggests that comments can be explored by all, with all.

A leader-Expert transacting with a participant-Expert can produce confrontation, hostility, mutual support, or exclusion of participant-non-Experts. Few of the consequences of an Expert-Expert transaction contribute to an effective workshop. Facilitator-Facilitator transactions may result in boredom, labored discussion, lack of conclusions, or abdication of leadership. The leader-Facilitator has to 'sense' when to terminate the transaction in favor of establishing conclusions. An example is, "There have been a variety of view points expressed and it appears that we agree that. . ." Seeker-Seeker transactions are often fun, an exploration of ideas and experiences, but they may be tangential to the workshop purposes. They may result in continued ignorance, mutual sympathy for one another's difficulties, and a general dissatisfaction about the workshop leader's lack of information. These transactions need to be concluded by a leader-Expert with guidance for the issues involved or by a leader-Expert requesting a participant-Expert to make specific suggestions.

States Have No Inherent Value. There is no inherent value in any state. No one state is suitable for the workshop leader or the participants at all times during a workshop. And no one state is suitable for all situations.

The value of a state depends on its appropriateness to a situation. The workshop leader has the responsibility to guide information, discussion, and activities toward the purposes that brought people together in the meeting. Questions of fact (participant-Seeker) may be handled by the leader-Expert.

Inquiries requiring judgment may be handled by the leader-Facilitator who deliberately chooses not to answer and elicits responses from participants-Experts. Following participant-Expert comments, the leader-Facilitator may summarize and conclude the discussions.

The adoption of different states by the leader should be deliberate; a state should be selected to promote continued communication, understanding, and involvement. The leader must avoid adversary transactions, protect participants from threatening transactions, view all comments as non-threatening, and conclude non-productive transactions.

Group management requires workshop leaders to know their behavior state. They must calculate the participant's state, consider consequences of possible transactions, and choose the state most appropriate for the situation.

Chapter IV

PROCESSING

The single most important contribution of a workshop leader is processing the contributions of participants and integrating them into the workshop content. In synthesizing contributions, the workshop leader is assisting participants to acquire new insights, perceptions, and information. Without the workshop leader's skilled processing, participant comments and activities remain fragmented and unrelated.

Within the context of a workshop, processing is the technique by which the workshop leader selects, clarifies, and directs participant contribution. It also includes the translation of opinion, experience, and illustrations into the conceptual framework of

the workshop. As the workshop leader relates otherwise isolated pieces of information, the participant is guided to an increased awareness, a broadened scope of relevance, an understanding of a new totality, and an opportunity for application of new insights to personal and professional behavior.

Ingredients in the Processing 'Mix'. Each ingredient in a workshop must be considered by the leader. There are participants, each of whom is unique. They may have many similarities, but each participant brings a different perspective conditioned by age, sex, work experience, family background, education, religion, professional training, and other factors. The workshop framework is another ingredient with purposes, content, technique, activities, and discussion. Common experiences are created through participant sharing in activities and exercises within the workshop. The paramount ingredient is the workshop leader who may be likened to the orchestra conductor --selecting, encouraging, signaling, leveling, extending, compressing, molding--whose direction produces harmony from the cacophony of disparate elements.

Processing Skills. The workshop leader utilizes four interrelated skills in blending discrete, isolated elements into a total learning experience.

Paraphrasing verifies and clarifies information for participants. In general, paraphrasing relies on low-threat, low-keyed questioning that allows the listener to assume responsibility for the absence of understanding and the need for clarification. For instance, the workshop leader may ask, "Am I correct in saying that you mean...?" Paraphrasing does not require the speaker to defend a statement, merely clarify it. Additionally, the listener's feeling about the statement should not be evident at any time during the exchange. All the workshop leader wants is to understand very clearly what is being said, not argue with it.

Total and complete attention to each individual's contribution is required if the workshop leader is to process effectively. Only intense attention allows the workshop leader to locate the relevance, no matter how obscure, in the participant's comment. It may be necessary for the workshop leader to seek clarification of one individual's comment from other participants. In any event, the leader must integrate every participant contribution.

Processing often requires the workshop leader to add a missing component. For example, the workshop leader might relate comments heard during monitoring of small group activities or inject relevant comments made earlier in the session. The leader might also use focused-elicitation, a technique of asking questions and selecting responses which establish or reinforce a desired point. Similarly, the workshop leader might encourage comments from participants reluctant to speak in the large session but who contributed significant information in smaller groups. Insights and illustrations acquired in other workshops might be related.

Finally, workshop leaders must synthesize all comments, into a relevant, understandable whole. They can help the group see the progression of the workshop by helping participants recall earlier, supporting comments. They can demonstrate how the activities, discussions, and lectures fit together to establish useful principles.

Processing in a workshop is analagous to processing cheese. From the basic ingredients of milk, two cheeses as dissimilar as brie and mozzarella may be processed. The milk may vary; it comes from cows, sheep, goats, even camels; it may vary because of water quality, soil composition, climatic differences, and types of grass. Different ingredients may be added--garlic, cumin, caraway, almond. The cheese may be bathed in beer, brandy, brine, wine, or a multitude of other ordinary or extraordinary

substances. Some cheeses are ripened, others are not; some use white mold, others blue.

At each stage of processing cheese, someone makes the decision as to what is to be done. The exact kind and quality of cheese is determined by these decisions during the processing. The workshop leader, through processing, can help create for participants a gourmet delight--or sour curds.

Chapter V

WORKSHOPS AND CULTURES

Neither the tasks nor the related skills, discussed previously, can be mechanically performed. Workshop leaders are effective only if they feel comfortable with a group of participants and can undertake the tasks and exercise the skills with confidence. They must understand what is happening among participants and between themselves and participants. Messages--both verbal and non-verbal--must be clearly understood and correctly interpreted.

Cultural Diversity. Ordinarily the labels for cultural diversity, such as cross cultural, inter-cultural, and trans-cultural, are considered applicable to international communication and relations. A nation is frequently viewed as encompassing one common culture within its boundaries. Inter-cultural becomes international, a crossing of national boundaries.

As Americans, we sometimes disguise effectively, although not deliberately, the great cultural diversity within our nation. We often hear others and ourselves speak of American values and the American way. We talk about what "the American people believe and do" as if all are identical products of the same cultural mold. Even if different values and patterns

of behavior are acknowledged, they are often identified with ethnic origin, race, or religion. The difference is 'their' sub-culture within America; and the 'melting pot' will simmer to assimilate, integrate, and make uniform.

Workshop leaders might usefully consider America as analogous to a beef stew, bound together but composed of very different and distinct items each of which is to be savored because of its difference. Most people delight in differences. Color, texture, and contrast in cloth, furniture, and architecture are deliberately mixed to dispel uniformity. Landscaping, floral arrangements, and food are varied for greater appeal. We discover in these differences a pleasing relief from sameness.

Human differences are not so readily accepted as delightful. Different behavior patterns and attitudes seem to compel comparative evaluation; not merely different, but same as or better or worse than. And people may try to verify that their own behavior, customs, and attitudes are correct when they observe different behavior, customs, and attitudes. It is difficult to accept differences in humans as simply differences; it is rare to accept differences in humans as attractive as the differences in inanimate things and the natural world.

In our own cultural environment, we are comfortable as workshop leaders. We know what is expected of us, we know the group's expectations, and we can, with considerable accuracy, predict the behavior of the participants. With culturally different participants, workshop leaders may feel uncomfortable, grope to avoid offensive behavior and struggle to determine the appropriate behavior. For workshop leaders there are only two choices when anticipating participants who are culturally different: stay at home or recognize the hazards and prepare appropriately. For the latter, a good rule is to assume that any group which is not personally known is a different cultural

group. The hazards for the workshop leader are the differences in humor, language, behavior, frames of reference, and status determinations.

Cultural Hazards. Every American sub-culture has humor which is unique. Among all cultural differences, humor is probably the most difficult for outsiders to appreciate and understand. It may not be funny to the outsider; it may even be offensive. While humor is among the most common ways for a workshop leader to establish rapport with a group, the use of humor is not appropriate when working with a different cultural group. Workshop leaders should avoid the humor of the different culture, even if known, and should avoid the humor of their own culture as well. The relaxed, confident, professional behavior of the workshop leader can encourage the creation of a humor appropriate and acceptable within that particular workshop.

Among members of a culture, there is also an argot, a vocabulary of words common to many cultures but with meanings unique to a specific cultural group. For instance, youth almost daily invest widely used words with special meanings. As these meanings become known by outsiders and the words are used by persons outside the youth culture, such as parents and teachers, the meanings are revised or other words are invested with the same meaning in order to preserve the privacy of the argot. Since language is an important indication of cultural membership, argot and slang should be avoided. Instead, use 'Walter Cronkite American,' a standard and accepted usage that also avoids the argot of academics, bureaucrats, and corporate executives.

Cultures not only have particular humor and languages; they also have specific behaviors and mannerisms. Gestures, intonation, body movements, accepted ways of sitting, standing, walking, dressing, accents, pace of conversation, phrasing of questions, methods of commenting--these and other

specific behaviors vary widely. Workshop leaders should determine in advance the required adjustments in the necessary specific behaviors and mannerisms. They should never imitate those of the different culture; rather, try to neutralize their own.

While many Americans, because of the mass media, share a frame of reference, examples and illustrations used by the workshop leader may not be within the range of experience of culturally different participants. The examples and illustrations may confuse more than clarify. Workshop leaders should not adopt examples and illustrations which they suspect, or know, are appropriate. They may be appropriate within the different culture, but the workshop leader may be considered an inappropriate user. A workshop leader should determine with a knowledgeable member of the cultural group that the examples and illustrations are appropriate. Participants can also be requested to supply examples and illustrations.

Within every workshop, there are ranks of status determined long before the workshop was convened. Some participants arrive as recognized leaders, receiving deference from others. Workshop leaders should identify those with higher status and adopt the cultural practices reflected in the workshop. For instance, identification by first name may be appropriate for most participants, but not appropriate for others. The workshop leader must determine the manner in which participants address one another, particularly to insure that first names are used categorically rather than intimately. The workshop leader should also be wary about initiating logistic, schedule, or content changes. These decisions should be deferred to the 'contact' person who is aware of the cultural implications of the action.

By being aware of cultural hazards, workshop leaders can promote their personal feeling of comfort and thereby increase their effectiveness. And no matter how familiar with the different culture,

workshop leaders should remember themselves, their culture, and their roots. A Liberian proverb is a wise caution: "Just because you're in the water doesn't mean you are a fish."

Chapter VI

CONCLUSION

This has been a brief exploration of the nature of workshops and the tasks and skills of the workshop leader. It is a primer for those wishing to become effective workshop leaders, and the suggestions will require thought, further study, and practice. Most important is practice, even though mistakes and failures are assured. Workshop leaders develop by doing, and they learn more from their mistakes and failures than from comprehensive texts. All workshop leaders, no matter how experienced, make mistakes and continue to learn and improve. Mistakes permit the leader to learn and change, and fortunately they are frequently obvious only to the workshop leader, not the participants.

A combination of skills and experience will enable the workshop leader to react, immediately and appropriately, to many diverse situations, change techniques as required, and manage participation competently. As a workshop is creative and productive for participants, so workshop leaders will find it enjoyable and stimulating.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Arlene K. Schindler is Executive Director of Women in Community Service, Inc. (WICS) which coordinates the members and resources of Church Women United, National Council of Catholic Women, National Council of Jewish Women, National Council of Negro Women, and American GI Forum Women in programs of community welfare to combat poverty. Dr. Schindler is nationally known as a dynamic speaker and workshop leader on various aspects of voluntary management and community service. Prior to WICS, she served as the Director of Education and Training for the National Center for Voluntary Action where she designed and managed many programs to enrich the management of voluntary agencies.

J. Dale Chastain is the Director of Special Projects for Joint Action in Community Service, Inc. (JACS) a non-profit organization that combines vocational training, employment, and volunteerism for impoverished and disadvantaged youth. Previously, Mr. Chastain worked with a management consulting firm specializing in community-based and voluntary organizations. He was with Peace Corps five years, serving as Country Director in three West African nations.